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A Note from our Executive Director

Happy Holidays to all of our friends and partners!

This is a time of year to reflect on the joys and blessings of the year behind us and to look forward to the challenges and opportunities in the year ahead. I am especially grateful for the strong support that Take Pride has received over the past year from all of you. I think back to the leadership and energy of Darin Bird, Jason Curry, Sherry Foot and everyone else who assisted the Take Pride in Utah group host our very successful meeting in February. I am grateful for the time and talent Clint Eastwood donated to us for our wonderful PSAs, and to all of the support crew who made the shoot and distribution successful – and the many partners who paid for production and distribution. We couldn't have gotten our Take Pride Schools off the ground without the enthusiasm and creativity of our friends at the Walt Disney Company – as well as our first Take Pride School, Carmel River School, in Carmel, California.



Secretary Norton gives Marti Allbright a framed memoir from the Department of the Interior as a thank you for her service.

We have enjoyed so many great projects and events which could not have happened without support from so many, including California Department of Parks and Recreation, the Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, PriceWaterhouse Coopers, Good Sam Club, and so many others. Our awards ceremony is always special in part due to the generosity of Unilever in hosting our reception. Space limitations do not allow me to mention individually every one of our good friends and supportive partners who have made 2005 such a successful year at Take Pride in America – but please know that we appreciate you and all that you do.

With all of this bounty in mind, and the knowledge that many wonderful things are on the horizon for 2006, it is truly with mixed feelings that I say goodbye. I am leaving the Department of the Interior at the end of December to return to private law practice. Take Pride is being left in good and capable hands – I am confident that the fabulous team in place will carry on without skipping a beat. I will miss working with all of you – this has been a tremendous and joyous experience. Hopefully our paths will continue to cross – perhaps at a Take Pride event somewhere – someplace in 2006 since I can now be a true public lands volunteer!

Sincerely,

Marti Allbright

UP-COMING EVENTS

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service
January 16, 2006
www.mlkday.org

National Youth Service Day
April 21-23, 2006
www.ysa.org/nysd

Earth Day
April 22, 2006

National Volunteer Week
April 23-29, 2006
www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nvw

National Arbor Day
April 28, 2006
www.arboday.org

Lake Milton State Park: Volunteers Build Safe Boardwalk for Recreation Enthusiasts

Anyone who thinks retirement means not working should take a good look at what the volunteers of the **Lake Milton Nature/ Art Council** have accomplished. The council has been working to build a nature center with an amphitheater and boat dock in Lake Milton State Park in northeastern **Ohio**.

Barb Neill, Park Manager for Lake Milton State Park, said, "This group of volunteers has my utmost admiration. They are all retired, but when you see them work and the projects they have completed, they all look twenty-five again."

They have begun work on a paved accessible walkway and a 900 foot boardwalk that will allow walkers, cyclists and runners a safe passageway from the east side of Lake Milton State Park to the west side. Currently, the existing walkway is a two-foot wide trail next to a busy highway, separated only by a guardrail.



Members of the Lake Milton Nature/Art Council lay the foundation for the new 900 foot boardwalk.



The project has been a true example of partnership: the county allowed the boardwalk to be built on the right of way, the township assisted with large equipment and manpower, and the state park and the volunteers worked to secure a grant for the cost of the project.

In addition to physically doing the work, the volunteers assisted in securing a grant for the project, while also raising enough money to include a gazebo and docking area for local boaters to access the boardwalk.

The project should be completed in time for the 2006 summer season.

2005 Year in Review

As 2005 comes to an end, Take Pride in America® has many successes to celebrate. In addition to expanding volunteerism on public lands, Take Pride launched the new public service announcement campaign for television and print, introduced the exciting Take Pride Schools program, and initiated the Save the Mustangs program. We've made great progress in connecting the American people to our public lands. Here's just some of what we accomplished this year:

- o 8.3 million viewers in 117 broadcast markets saw the public service announcements.

- o Principals in every school in the Nation received notice of the new Take Pride in America Schools program—that's 111,000 schools.

- o 60,000 Volunteer Guides were distributed at National Public Lands Day sites.

- o 264 Take Pride events were posted to our online event calendar and hundreds more were hosted by our partners, including 800 event sites by National Public

- o Lands Day and 250 sites by Good Sam Club National Clean Up Day.

- o More than 300 donors gave \$23,000 to the Save the Mustangs Fund to help ensure long-term sustainability of wild horses.

- o 250 Secretarial and 400 Presidential Volunteer Service Awards were given to individuals who contributed over 3,000 and 4,000 hours of service to public lands, respectively.

- o 26 individuals and groups were recognized with the Take Pride National Award.

SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

Trees, Plants and Handmade Tiles Beautify School

Story submitted by Barbi Miller, teacher

What a Difference a Day Can Make! In **Brevard County, Florida**, a group of Gifted Program students at **Palm Bay Elementary School** spent a Saturday in October at their school with the purpose of making their campus more beautiful. The student group ranged in age from grades Pre-K through Sixth, and several PBE alumni who are now in middle and high school joined in to help!

The group planted fifteen trees around their campus. They added four laurel oaks to their Pirate Energy Action Patrol Problem Solvers (PEAPPS) Park in the bus loop area. They added three additional laurel oaks near the new building. Two palms were planted by the new building walkway and several maples were planted outside the windows to the new building. Eventually these trees will provide shade to the sunniest parts of the building! The group

also landscaped with beautiful croton plants between the new building and the old and created a beautiful new walkway. Items for the project were donated by the school's PTO and several local businesses.



Students, alumni, parents and teachers pause to show the newly landscaped courtyard between the buildings.



The team lays the base for the walkway which features tiles hand decorated by the students.

The stepping stones were painted earlier in the week by members of the 4th and 5th grade Gifted Program. Students chose their own artistic images to paint on the stones and all artwork is that of the students.

The Li'l Pirates worked under the adult direction of Barbi Miller (GSP teacher) and Kirsten McAteer (Keep Brevard Beautiful sponsor), Rich Miller (spouse), Sal Shields (custodian), Tony Troisi (head custodian), Sherie Vogt (teacher), Melanie Boswell (teacher and parent).

BUREAU SPOTLIGHT

Volunteers Remove 100 Tons of

Litter from Canal in Arizona

In **Yuma, Arizona**, volunteers gathered along a canal south of the Colorado River to collect litter resulting from illegal dumping in the area. On October 29, 2005, some 229 volunteers picked up more than 100 tons of trash in a two-mile-long area of the East Wetlands. The canal bank is littered with shopping carts, abandoned car parts, broken bottles, landscaping debris, old tires and other hazardous garbage. The city of Yuma Clean and Beautiful Commission and the Bureau of Reclamation sponsored the litter pickup effort, which included volunteers from both public agencies and private organizations, such as the Boy & Girl Scouts, City of Yuma, Yuma County and other civic groups.



In Southwestern Arizona, a volunteer collects litter from an illegal dumping area.

Pickett State Park Hosts First Take Pride Event

Volunteers gathered bright and early on Saturday morning, November 19, 2005 at **Pickett State Park in Jamestown, Tennessee** to tackle the thorny brush and robust mountain laurel that were encroaching upon one of Pickett State Park's most popular hiking destinations, Hidden Passage Trail. This trail is approximately 10 miles in length and is home to several rock overhangs, more commonly known as rock houses, waterfalls and breathtaking views from atop sandstone bluffs.



Park rangers and volunteers proudly 'Take Pride' in clearing a hiking trail in Tennessee.

A group of eight volunteers split into two teams and addressed areas on the trail most affected by overgrowth. They successfully removed vegetation from alongside five miles of trail over the course of the day. Fall maintenance of the trail will allow it to be passable for the influx of hikers in the springtime.

Say Cheese! Photo Contest Winners

Thanks to everyone who submitted photos for the contest announced in last month's newsletter. Our winners are **Joe Ross** in the Roseburg, Oregon BLM field office and **Donna Potter** with the Bureau of Reclamation in Sacramento, California. Each will receive a Take Pride Prize Pack. Congratulations and thanks for submitting your volunteer event photos!



Volunteers paint at a carport and outbuilding at BLM's North Bank Ranch on National Public Lands Day, September 24, 2005. Photo by Evan Olson, submitted by Joe Ross.



Bureau of Reclamation and Napa Dive Sports sponsored an underwater clean up at Pope Creek, California on September 16, 2005. Volunteers were wearing Mardi Gras beads found in the lake. Submitted by Donna Potter.

Coming Soon!



Applications for 2006 National Awards

Look for the application for the 2006 Take Pride National Awards to be posted on our website in January 2006. There are twelve categories of awards and all Take Pride events are eligible to be nominated. The Awards Ceremony will be in September 2006 in Washington, DC.

Welcome New Partner! Dex Media, Inc.

Take Pride welcomes Dex Media, Inc. as the newest member of our Partners Council.

Dex Media, Inc. is the exclusive publisher of the official White & Yellow Pages directories in print, internet and CD for Qwest Communications International, Inc. The directories are distributed to most business and residential consumers in 14 Western states.



New Take Pride Schools!

Riddle Education Center in Riddle, OR
Principal Al Springer

Fremont Middle School in Roseburg, OR
Principal Tim Wilson

Palm Bay Elementary in Palm Bay, FL
Principal Dr. Victoria Barkwell

McDonald Green Elementary in Lancaster, SC
Principal Kimerla Linton

Berkley Charter School in Auburndale, FL
Principal Randall Borland

Warm welcome to Principal Ken Douet,
the new principal at N.P. Moss Middle School
in Lafayette, Louisiana,
a Take Pride School since October 2005.

For Your Information

If you would like our Take Pride Volunteer Guides or plastic banners for your next event, simply email us the quantity and we will send them to you. To view a copy of the Guide online visit http://www.takepride.info/volguide/doi_volguide.pdf

Please continue to send us your photos and write-ups of your Take Pride in America events! An event evaluation form can be found on the homepage of our website at www.TakePride.gov.

Email takepride@ios.doi.gov if you have information for our newsletter, or if you have questions.

Thank you...

Thanks to our contributors for this edition of "In Touch With Take Pride." Please keep sending us articles for future editions.

Sincerely,
Take Pride Staff